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ONLY OUTLAWS WILL HAVE GUNS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on the very evening the President held a town hall calling for increased gun control, Philadelphia Police Officer Jesse Hartnett was shot at 11 times. None of the President's proposals would have prevented the attack.

More gun control will not stop criminals. The attack was carried out with a stolen police pistol. It will not stop the mentally ill. The shooter complained of hearing voices. More gun control will not stop terrorists. The attacker shouted his support for ISIS.

To reduce shootings, we must enforce current laws, reform mental health laws, and defeat Islamic terrorists overseas. They should update the age-old bumper sticker from, "If guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns" to, "If guns are outlawed, only outlaws and terrorists will have guns."

The only positive outcome of the Philadelphia attack is to identify a new American hero, Jesse Hartnett, who demonstrated the extraordinary professionalism of America's law enforcement as recognized last Saturday during National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Releasing terrorists from Guantanamo will allow mass murderers to secure guns to kill American families.

THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS ON GUN VIOLENCE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a sense of concern, of sadness, and, also, of relief regarding the heinous shooting of the Philadelphia police officer. I am grateful that he managed to survive, that he is in the hospital, and that he is healing. We wish him and his family well and that he, as well, will heal.

I think it is important to note that we need to look at the rage of gun violence from a sensible and logical perspective. Yes, the President's proposals would have had an impact on this crazed, allegedly ISIL-inspired individual who had no direct contact with ISIL, who had not been to the caliphate to fight, and who, unfortunately, had a previous criminal record.

How would the proposals do so?

First of all, it was a stolen gun. The President has suggested there be 200 more ATF officers to enforce the law. He has provided \$500 million for mental health resources, and this individual suffered from that.

In addition, he has provided for data collection, for the FBI to redo and to make more certain the inspection or the review of someone who is trying to get a gun.

Mr. Speaker, let's look logically at what the President has offered, and let's not get in the way. Let's try to help stem the tide of gun violence so that our officers, as well, are not in the line of fire.

WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARDY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about a very special group of women who were mentors to me and who were pioneering heroes of our country. These women were the Women Airforce Service Pilots, the WASPs.

Some people don't know that much about them, but here is a picture of them as they flew airplanes in the World War II era. When we needed everybody to serve in whatever capacity one could in our country, they needed women to step up and become pilots in order to do all sorts of different missions, like towing targets for the gunners on the ground to learn how to shoot things down, like training men to go on to fly in combat, like ferrying airplanes all over the theaters to deliver them where they needed to be in the combat zone and bringing them back for maintenance. They were test pilots and engineers. You name it.

These women were asked to step up and serve. They went through training. They put on the uniform. They lived in the barracks. They learned how to march. They were pioneers for women like me, who later on served as aviators in the military.

There are just a little over 1,000 of these amazing women who served in World War II. They weren't given Active-Duty status, although that was the intent of General Arnold when they set up this program.

If you think back then, the thought of having women military pilots was a little bit of a cultural hang-up. We will let women be Rosie the Riveter, and we will let women serve in support positions. But pilots? Now, that is kind of crazy talk.

So they had a little bit of a problem culturally, but they didn't care. They chose to serve anyway. They said, "I

am going to step up and serve my country. I am going to do that as a pilot. I am going to do this with honor and with valor," just like their male counterparts did in these very same missions before them, alongside them, and then after them.

Thirty-eight of them died in training or in conducting missions. Thirty-eight of them paid the ultimate sacrifice. They weren't even given veterans' benefits or any benefits after perishing in the line of duty, but they still continued to serve because their country needed them.

It was not until 1977 that they were actually given veteran status after the fact. They were then given honorable discharges. They were given the medals that their male counterparts got for serving as Active Duty in the military. They were allowed to be buried, with honors, in veterans' cemeteries across the country and were given full military honors, which they deserved.

They were actually allowed, as they should be allowed, to be in Arlington National Cemetery, alongside other heroes who have gone before them. Yet, we just found out within the last few weeks that that has been rescinded by the Department of Army.

That happened quietly back in March of 2015 to these heroes, who deserve to be recognized and who deserve to be a legacy in Arlington National Cemetery so that future generations will know what they did and will know of the doors that they opened in the way that they served. It was rescinded by the Army.

We didn't know about this until Elaine Harmon, one of the WASPs, passed away. I saw her handwritten will when I met with her family last week. It reads, "I desire to be in Arlington National Cemetery. I want my ashes there."

Her family put in the request like everybody else does, and they were denied. We now found out that the Army has rescinded that and that it is no longer allowing these pioneering women to be laid to rest in Arlington.

Elaine Harmon's ashes are sitting on a shelf in a closet in her granddaughter's home, awaiting her final resting place in Arlington, which she deserves. The Army gave us some bureaucratic answer about, oh, they are running out of space, and, by mistake, they opened it up.

In 2002, they actually allowed women to be in Arlington. Only two women took advantage of this and asked to be, in their own right, in Arlington. Then the Army turned around and rescinded it. Again, they gave some bureaucratic answer.

They are on the wrong side of this. We have looked into all of the legalities. The Army has all of the authorities that they need to allow these heroes to be laid to rest in Arlington, but they are choosing not to do so.

We have introduced legislation. We are going to make sure that it happens, but we are calling on them to actually

change it tonight. Right now, the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary of Defense or the President could tonight say: Do you know what? Elaine Harmon and the other WASPs—there are only a little over 100 who are still living—are going to be allowed to have their ashes in Arlington National Cemetery alongside other heroes. This is the least they could do, and they could do it tonight.

So I am leading the Special Order tonight. This is a bipartisan Special Order. This is bipartisan legislation, and it is bicameral. When we raised awareness of this issue and got the legislation together, we had nearly 80 sponsors right away on this bill who said: Let's change this thing.

Today the Senate introduced a similar bill, and we are going to work together to get this thing done. We want to continue to raise awareness to this issue, this egregious violation of these women. We want this thing changed now. It takes a little bit of time sometimes around here to work through legislation.

In the meantime, Elaine Harmon's ashes are sitting on a shelf in a closet. That is not the way we treat our heroes. That is not the way we treat our pioneers who paved the way for military aviators, like me, to be able to serve in the way we did, and it needs to be changed tonight.

We have a number of individuals here on both sides of the aisle who are going to be sharing this time with me tonight. I first yield to my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS), who is the lead Democratic cosponsor of this bill.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Thank you so much.

I am so glad that my colleague from Arizona is here to speak to this. She is very uniquely qualified to do that as one of the first women pilots—or the first—to actually fly in combat.

As I remember, the women who joined us a few years ago here in the Capitol who were part of the WASPs were here to receive Gold Medals for their heroic acts during the war and for really coming forward and being part of that volunteer band of women who had had some experience in flying, but who could not have imagined in their wildest dreams doing what they were asked to do, but they were delighted to do it.

As I will share, they actually wanted to do more, but there were some other people who took over and asked them to go home and enjoy their lives after they had given so much. So I am just delighted to join in this effort and to right this injustice for military trailblazers who were truly ahead of their time.

When the call came to serve in World War II, the WASPs answered that call just like millions of other Americans. They logged over 60 million miles in over 12,000 aircraft. As my colleague has said, 38 WASP women died while serving their country.

In 2009, as I mentioned, the WASPs were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for flying military missions in World War II. Boy, even when they were here, they were just a strong group of women who delighted in seeing one another and in reminding themselves of the amazing stories that they brought.

More than anything else, they serve today as great role models to women who were considering going in the Air Force, of course, and in the Navy, flying for our country, but, also, for taking on some remarkable challenges in their lives. They really represent that for all of us.

They fought, of course, and they died in service to their country. They trained in military style. They slept on metal cots like everybody else and marched and lived under military discipline. That is why we feel they deserve the full honors that we give our war heroes.

As has been mentioned, they were given those honors, but because we have a problem of space, it was decided that perhaps they were not at the top of the list. We need to be sure that we provide for everyone who needs to be there.

There are many WASPs who may not necessarily choose to be at Arlington National Cemetery, but for those who have chosen in working with their families—and their families have fought hard for them—this is something that we need to do.

I want to particularly mention—and I thought this was really fun to read—one of the articles about these WASPs.

This is Eddy, who is saying, "I thought it was the nastiest thing that they"—speaking of the Army Air Forces officials—"could have done to us." This was while she was receiving visitors at her home in Coronado. "They fired us. They gave our jobs to Air Force men who didn't want to go overseas. I would have gone overseas in a minute," she said. "I was a (heck of) a good fighter pilot."

In my community of San Diego, in El Cajon, I also have a woman named Joyce Secciani, who perhaps was not as forthright as Eddy.

But despite some fading memories, at 87, she still shares Vivian's passion for the WASPs and her disappointment with its demise. She was also one of the 1,102 women who flew in the all-volunteer program between 1942 and 1944.

She remarked, "All of us felt bad to lose (our flying jobs)—all of us wanted to keep up our ability to fly," because they knew that, with prevailing chauvinistic attitudes, there would be no pilots' work for them in the civilian realm.

We need to be sure that we don't lose our perspective about the work that these women did and that we honor them in this way, that we honor them and their families who supported them as well, because we know, with all of our military families, it is not just the person who serves, but it is the entire family who serves as well.

That was certainly true of these WASPs, whose family members worried about them and were concerned about them as they carried on with their duties as forcibly as they did.

Let's send that message. Let's continue to work hard. I know that the WASPs are also planning a museum to honor them and to make sure that the country never forgets the work that they did because it was necessary.

Had they not been there to do that work, many, many people would not have received the materials. Whatever it was, they were making sure that it got to our fighting warriors during World War II.

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I am so delighted that my colleague is choosing to move forward with this. I want to turn it back to her, and I know that there are other colleagues of mine over here that would like very much to join in this.

Ms. MCSALLY. Thank you, Congresswoman DAVIS. I really appreciate your partnership on this issue. Together we can show the American people that we can be united on these things that matter to support our veterans and support our heroes and, again, put the pressure on the administration that we have oversight of to actually fix this wrong right now. I really look forward to continuing working with you on it.

I yield to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN), who is joining this discussion as a cosponsor on the bill, very strongly supporting this initiative.

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congresswoman.

I don't think it much matters if you are a man or you are a woman, but you serve in the United States military. Anybody who has stood up for this country to protect our freedom, protect our way of life, protect our kids, they should receive the full benefits, the full honors of anybody who served in uniform.

Now, tonight, as Congresswoman MCSALLY said, we can fix this. There is absolutely no reason whatsoever why the Pentagon should, for some reason, say there is no room at Arlington. Are you kidding me?

Over 1,000 of these brave, patriotic women, during a time where, as Congresswoman MCSALLY and Congresswoman DAVIS mentioned, they were not always welcomed in doing what men were doing, they stood up, they stood up and they left their homes and they left their families. They did what was right. They served this country with honor, with dignity. They flew 78 different types of aircraft all over the world. Over 60 million miles were logged. Look at this picture.

I salute you, Congresswoman, for bringing this before us.

Now, do you think any of these WASPs were saying, "Well, I don't know, we just can't get this done, we just can't perform this mission, I am sorry"? Well, the Pentagon needs to step up right now. They need to find a

way to make sure, if these WASPs want to be interred at Arlington, they should be.

Now, some of the missions that these brave women flew on included transporting these vehicles all around the world. You know what they also did? They towed targets for men on the ground that were practicing artillery. Did you hear one of these WASPs complain, "Gee, I hope that these men will hit the targets instead of us"?

The least the Pentagon can do is to take this seriously, listen to the will of the people, and make sure that these brave women are so honored by being interred, if they wish, at Arlington.

Now, one of these humble American heroes is a woman by the name of Betty Anne Brown, who very recently passed away at age 92. Now, wouldn't she be proud of all of us today standing up and asking that our country, that the Pentagon does the right thing?

I salute Ms. MCSALLY for her leadership on this issue. The Pentagon can do what is right today. As you mentioned, Congresswoman, legislation is not needed if our Commander in Chief or the folks who run the Pentagon stand up and do what is right.

These women deserve every right to be buried at Arlington if they so wish.

Thank you very much, and I am honored to cosponsor this bill.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. POLQUIN. I really appreciate his strong support and strong words in support of this effort here.

I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my good friend. I think back to how many years ago it was this week, actually, when I was your guest at the State of the Union Address. So I have appreciated your support to me when I was in the military and the fights that we had to make sure that women were treated fairly and, also, your strong support on this particular effort.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman MCSALLY for yielding. I want to thank her for bringing our attention to this important issue this evening.

I am proud to serve with her on the House Armed Services Committee. I know she is very proud to represent the people of Arizona in the Second Congressional District there.

I might make note that Ms. MCSALLY's roots are from my home State of Rhode Island. She and I grew up in the same neighborhood, and I am proud to have worked with her on several issues since she has arrived in Congress. I was proud, again, back then to have her as my guest to the State of the Union Message as she mentioned.

Again, I thank you for raising this important issue. I find it completely disheartening that the Women Airforce Service Pilots have been denied interment in one of our Nation's most sacred national burial grounds where we honor our men and women who have served.

These brave female aviators of World War II embody courage, resiliency, and

patriotism. Again, I am proud to support Congresswoman MCSALLY's efforts to reinstate their interment eligibility in Arlington National Cemetery. Without these women, some of whom made the ultimate sacrifice for our country in one of its greatest times of need, our Nation would not stand where it does in the world today. We are indebted to them for their service.

The very least that we can do, Mr. Speaker, is to honor them with the dignity and the respect that they have earned and so deserve. We have got to see this policy reversed. I know that we will. It is a bipartisan effort. I am proud to join with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in raising attention to this issue and insisting that we ensure that these brave female aviators of World War II, again, who embody the courage and resiliency and patriotism that this country so admires and that we are grateful for, and that we see that they are properly given the honor that they deserve.

Again, I want to thank Congresswoman MCSALLY for shedding this light on this misguided injustice.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LANGEVIN.

Again, I appreciate your support on this bill and your friendship over the years. I look forward to working together to getting this mission done and then additional things in the future. Thank you so much for your strong support for our heroes.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). She has been a strong advocate, as others who have spoken today, for the WASPs and especially the push for the Congressional Gold Medal. I am just honored to have you as a cosponsor and a strong advocate on this bill.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I am so pleased, so honored, so humbled to be part of your Special Order. In the short time that you have been in Congress, you have been a real leader on so many important issues, and I think none as important as the one that you are spearheading today.

I rise today to support you in your mission to give due recognition to the Women Airforce Service Pilots, otherwise known as WASPs, not the other WASPs that you know about. These are the real ladies that got the job done. They are a remarkable group of women who served our country proudly during World War II.

As you heard from the other speakers, our country turned to female pilots to deliver planes to our military air bases overseas, tow targets for live antiaircraft artillery practice, and simulate strafing missions. They became the first women in U.S. history to fly for our proud military.

Out of more than 25,000 women who applied for the program, only 1,704 were accepted in noncombat roles. These courageous American women logged in more than 60 million miles between 1942 and 1944, but it wasn't until 1977 that Congress passed legislation that

gave these patriotic women their much-deserved veteran recognition.

In 2002, Arlington National Cemetery decided to allow WASPs, among others listed as Active Duty designees, to receive benefits consistent with the status that they had so rightfully earned. However, the Department of the Army recently rescinded this decision and made these brave women aviators of World War II ineligible for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

As the author of the legislation—and the gentlewoman and I have talked about this repeatedly—awarding WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal in the year of 2009, I am honored to stand with my friend and colleague, Congresswoman MARTHA MCSALLY, a true patriot in her own right, to ensure that the WASPs have the right to have these services alongside the rest of our war heroes. These patriotic women selflessly helped defend our country. They deserve full military honor.

I am humbled and proud to represent south Florida, and I would like to inform the gentlewoman that this has been home to some of these remarkable heroine women. I am going to mention some of their names: Frances Rohrer Sargent, Helen Wyatt Snapp, Ruth Schafer Fleisher, Shirley Kruse, and Bee Haydu. Some are with us, and some are no longer with us. Some are not in great shape because they served in World War II. It is happening throughout our Nation where we see our finest passing away.

In this time of great challenges to women, those women that you have there before us, they pushed beyond the boundaries. They brought new opportunities for women to come.

My daughter-in-law, Lindsay, she flew combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan for the Marines, but she would not have been able to do so without the women who came before her. Just as you are a pioneer—to the gentlewoman I say thank you for your patriotic duty—but you stand also on their shoulders. These pioneers fought for the values of freedom and democracy. It is our duty to ensure that they are not denied the recognition for their service.

We shouldn't be begging for this. With the valiant efforts of these American heroines, the United States and our allies were able to successfully defeat the Axis Powers during World War II.

I thank you, Congresswoman MCSALLY, for introducing this important legislation that would make the Women Airforce Service Pilots eligible, once again, for the services in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. I agree with you that we don't need the legislation; that tonight, the Secretary of the Army could do the right thing, as he had done before, sign the order making this happen.

We will continue the battle in their names. Thank you so much to the gentlewoman. Thank you for spearheading

this effort. Thank you for taking this on. You are a valuable member of this institution. Thank you for the time.

Ms. MCSALLY. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida. As soon as I mentioned it to ILEANA, she was like: This is wrong. We have got to get involved. We have got to fix this.

So I appreciate your strong advocacy before I got here, and your continued advocacy as a wingwoman in this cause.

You know, for the WASPs in this story and this cause, it is not just the right thing to do for the country. For me, it is also personal. These women opened the door for me to be able to be a pilot in the Air Force and, when the doors were opened, to transition to be a fighter pilot in the Air Force.

I will be honest with you, I didn't hear about them when I was in high school. This is one reason why it is so important that we allow them to be laid to rest in Arlington, so that it is part of the education for future generations.

It wasn't until I went off to the Air Force Academy that I actually learned about the WASPs and learned about what they did. I just didn't even imagine that we would have women military pilots in the 1940s in World War II, but we did.

I got to meet some of these amazing women when I first came to Tucson to fly the A-10 Warthog, started my training. There were several of them that lived in southern Arizona, and I got to become friends with them, and they became mentors to me and encouragers to me.

As the doors were opening up for us to transition into fighters, there was hardly anybody we could really look to who understood what it was like to be in challenging circumstances where you are the only woman. People have attitudes about whether you can or cannot or should or should not do what you are doing as an aviator. But these women understood that. They put up with the same biases and the same discrimination as they served. They flew in World War II.

As I was looking around for someone to have as a role model, these women were incredible friends to me and supporters and wingwomen to me.

Here is one picture I want to show you. This is Ruth Helm, one of the Tucson residents who, sadly, made her final flight over the last year. This is when she was inducted into the Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame. This is a picture of the two of us in civilian clothes as she was inducted there.

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These women paved the way for me, but they encouraged me. Even at my most challenging times, when I was feeling discouraged, I would sit down with them, and they would just fire me up to live to fight and fly another day.

Despite the fact that they were told to leave the military after all they did, they still were proud. They didn't have

a chip on their shoulder. They were grateful for the opportunities that they had. They laughed off some of the challenges that they went through. They just started encouraging me, "Come on, you can do it. We did it." I just was able to kind of get back in there and continue to push forward because of what they did before me to open up the doors for me.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. MCSALLY. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Obviously we share a compassion and passion for these wonderful women. We also serve on the Committee on Homeland Security together.

First of all, let me thank you for your service and thank you so very much for bringing this very important issue, this bipartisan issue to the floor of the House and certainly to your colleagues. I am looking forward to working with you on this issue.

I just want to say that one of my greatest joys in the United States Congress was the military war zones that I had the chance to go to, starting with the Bosnian war. I came in in that timeframe and traveled to that area, Kosovo and Albania, and then, of course, Iraq and Afghanistan and certainly a number of other sites where issues of conflict were going on.

There I saw a myriad of women who stood on the shoulders of these women, who are now in a variety of the branches, not just aviators or in the Air Force in particular, but they stood on the shoulders of these women. It gave me a sense of pride and duty to say to them, "Thank you."

Women are unique. Many of them are mothers or sisters and daughters who are in the service, or they take care of children, or they are nurturers for someone else. We have a particular role, but yet they are in the military leaving their families.

Just coming in today, I read an article about the ranger who is from my constituency who just came out of ranger school and is from Houston. I simply want to say, this is the right thing to do.

Every year—and I think you have joined us now as you have come to Congress—we go on Memorial Day week to Arlington and lay a wreath for women who died in the line of duty or in the service of their country. Does anyone realize the numbers of women? We have been doing this now for more than a decade, and the women of the House join us. They do that because this is a valuable part of America's history.

To the lady, the aviator that now, I wouldn't say languished, but is with her granddaughter, her ashes are with her granddaughter, I want to make a public commitment joining you to say that her ashes should be in a place where she can rest in peace. We should move this quickly. If it requires an independent action by the Army, a reconsideration, I am sure none of us

would be offended by the Army rescinding this particular—how should I say it?—action.

I just wanted to come and thank you. I want to thank my colleague SUSAN DAVIS and all of my colleagues who have been on the floor. I did not want to miss this opportunity.

Coming from Texas, I think, as I walk down the streets of Houston or travel throughout the State of Texas, I see veterans and Active Duty everywhere. We are proud of that. In urban centers like Houston, you would think not, but they are dominant there.

Just this past Christmas, we had what we call Toys for Kids and honored veterans' families. This is an important mission, and I want to join you in this mission. We have gotten our assignment. We really need to work. I think the American people need to know that all of us will join together to honor either our veterans, our fallen soldiers, or those who were the pioneers who I know the story of, who stood when they were called and did not step away from duty, did not step away from the danger, did not step away from possible death as they pursued the cause of this country and to protect this country.

I thank you for yielding to me.

I am ready to roll up my sleeves. Let's get busy. Let's help find a resting place for this dear sister and servant of the Nation. Let's find a resting place going forward for all of those who have served this wonderful and great country. They deserve it.

Ms. MCSALLY. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for joining the conversation tonight, again, to continue to highlight this egregious action that was taken that is putting our heroes in a place, especially Elaine Harmon, right now, where she has nowhere to be able to rest in peace. The place that she wanted to be is denying her, even though her service and the criteria are very clear that she has earned that right.

I really appreciate you joining this bipartisan mission. We are not going to rest until the mission is complete. I want to thank the gentlewoman for that.

As I was mentioning, this isn't just the right thing to do, but this is personal for me. As I transitioned into fighters, these women, these pioneers who opened up the door for me to even have the opportunity to become a fighter pilot, they mentored me. They walked alongside me. They encouraged me. They gave me some perspectives from their own training and their own experiences. They made me laugh. They made me cry. They were friends who just paved the way for me.

You think about the debates we have had in this body over the years. I mean, women couldn't be pilots again in the military until, the late 1970s or early 1980s, they finally opened up the door for women to be pilots. But they could only serve in noncombat roles.

When they had that debate, that didn't have to be theoretical or hypothetical. They had the example of these amazing women who did what they did in World War II—again, over a thousand of them, under extraordinary circumstances, flying by themselves, often just trying to figure it out in bad weather and how they were going to land and dealing with emergencies and clearances and just doing what it took in order to get the mission done, get the plane where it needed to be, train the men to go off and fly in combat, tow the targets, do the simulated strafing runs, all the test piloting, everything, to include risking their lives. Thirty-eight of them died.

This is personal to me. These three women pictured in this photo—Dawn Seymour, Eleanor Gunderson, and Ruth Helm—they are sitting in this photo in the front row of the change of command ceremony that I had where I took over command of an A-10 fighter squadron, which was an historic day for our country that we finally had a woman doing that. It was an historic day for me to be able to take command of a squadron. I invited them and asked them to sit in the front row. I honored them in my change of command speech because I wanted to make sure that everybody there knew that I only had the opportunities that I had in the military because they paved the way.

These three women are personal friends of mine. Two of them have since had their final flight. Dawn Seymour is still with us, but the other two have passed away. We have to keep their legacy going. We have to make sure the next generations know how they served with honor at a time when the country needed them. We have to make sure that Elaine Harmon and any of the other WASPs who want to have their ashes in Arlington Cemetery are allowed to do that.

Let's be clear. The only reason these women were not considered Active Duty at the time was because of gender biases and discrimination against women. That is the only reason. Had they been a man doing those jobs, they would have been Active Duty in the Army Air Corps; they would have been discharged honorably; and under the current guidelines, they would have been eligible to have their ashes at Arlington. The only reason they were not Active Duty at the time was because of gender discrimination.

Now this is 2016. It is time for that to stop. We thought it was over in 1977 when we finally retroactively gave them that veteran status. They were given those honorable discharges and the medals that they deserved from serving in World War II. We opened up the door for them to have military honors and to be laid to rest in veteran cemeteries around the country.

Arlington Cemetery opened up the doors to them finally—a little late, but in 2002. Last March, without telling anybody, they quietly rescinded that. It was just the last slap of gender dis-

crimination against these amazing pioneers. It needs to be overturned immediately. This is the right thing to do for Elaine Harmon and for the other women who are still living. There are about 100 of them who are still with us; and for the next generations who need to know about their service, they deserve to be laid to rest next to the other heroes who are there.

The Secretary of the Army has all the authority he needs to let Elaine Harmon's ashes be in Arlington. Let's be clear. This does not take legislation. He has all the authority he needs to make that happen tonight. If he won't do it, the Secretary of Defense can. If he won't do it, then President Obama can. We should not wait another day, Mr. Secretary, Mr. President, before making the decision and calling on Elaine Harmon's family and saying, "It is approved. Elaine can rest in peace in Arlington National Cemetery," which is what she deserved and what she asked for. We should not be lingering another day.

As we continue to call on the administration to do the right thing, we are not going to sit by idly. We have got our legislation introduced. We have got almost 80 cosponsors in the House. We have got a Senate version of the bill that was introduced today, led by Senator MIKULSKI and Senator ERNST, also a bipartisan bill. We are going to continue to push this forward to make this right for our heroes, these Women Airforce Service Pilots, these WASPs. It is the least that we could do for all they have done for us.

The last thing I want to say before I close out is that this just seems to be a cruel irony and a cruel contradiction if you think about it. Just last month, the Pentagon announced that they are opening up, finally, all positions in the military to women. It has been a long road to get to that place. I have been a strong advocate for that happening for a very long time.

We are a country that is about equal opportunity. We are a country that treats people as individuals. Our foundations are based on not treating people as a class. We should always, and in the military as well, pick the best man for the job, even if it is a woman.

It has been a long haul to get over our biases as a country about what we think women as a whole group could or should do in service to our military. Gradually, positions have been opened. Gradually, women have continued to show that, when called, they will serve valiantly and with honor. They will fight and they will die, if needed, for our freedoms and our liberty.

At the time that the Pentagon is opening up all positions to women in the military that they are qualified for, they are closing the doors to Arlington for the pioneers who made that happen. That is a cruel hypocrisy and contradiction, and it needs to be made right tonight.

So again, I call on the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of Defense, and

the President—perhaps he could announce it in his speech tomorrow night—that one of the legacy things that we are going to do for our heroes, for our pioneers, for these amazing women, is to allow them to be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. We owe it to them. They paved the way as trailblazers. We owe it to them to be able to rest alongside the other heroes and to be able to continue to educate the next generations about their legacy.

All I will say to the WASPs is: I have got your back. You had mine, and I have got yours now. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EGYPT TALKING POINTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her presentation here tonight and the collection of people who came down to support her initiative and her agenda.

I thank the men and women who have stepped up and put on the uniform and actually those, also, who have risked their lives who were not formally wearing the uniform to defend our country.

I am one who, I think you know, Mr. Speaker, has great reverence for our constitutional values and the pillars of American exceptionalism, the underpinnings that make this a great nation. One of the things that we have been able to do as a great nation is be able to inspire others.

If we look around the world, there are those who think that the only thing that could happen that is good to somebody is if we just bring them into America and give them access to our welfare benefits and maybe they will become good Americans and all will be right with the world, but I don't know if they have done the geography very well, Mr. Speaker, and recognize that we can do a lot more good by helping people where they are so that they can help themselves.

One of the most important things we can do is not send the wealth of America over to give people money and food and housing. That goes on from time to time, and there is a good number of times it is very well justified. But the best thing we can do is inspire others to live and model after the freedom of the United States of America. Then they can help themselves, Mr. Speaker.

I think of a time I sat down with several Ambassadors to the United States from Israel. We had a meeting over here in a room just off the House floor.